

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

The only issue raised in the Official Action involves the anticipatory rejection of Claims 1-16 on the basis of the disclosure contained in U.S. Patent No. 5,762,384 to *Bartel*. As discussed below in more detail, original Claim 1 defines the vehicle door lock system of the present invention in a manner that patentably distinguishes the claimed invention over the disclosure contained in *Bartel*. Accordingly, reconsideration of the rejection based on the disclosure contained in *Bartel* is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

The claims in this application are directed to a vehicle door lock system. As defined in original independent Claim 1, the vehicle door lock system comprises a latch mechanism for latching the vehicle door to the vehicle body, an open link that is engageable and disengageable with the latching mechanism, a swing lever connected to the open link, an electric driving source provided with a gear member, and a rotary gear member in meshing engagement with the gear member of the electric driving source. The rotary gear member is arranged between the swing lever and the electric driving source, and is directly and engageably connected to the swing lever.

The Official Action observes that the vehicle door locking unit disclosed in *Bartel* includes a latching mechanism defined by the rotary bolt 11 and the keeper 12, an opening

actuating element 22 corresponding to the claimed open link, a lever 6 corresponding to the claimed swing lever, a motor 8 corresponding to the claimed electric driving source, and various elements 37, 38, 39 corresponding to the claimed rotary gear member.

One of the differences between the claimed vehicle door locking unit and the vehicle door locking unit described in *Bartel* involves the opening actuating element 22 which is said to correspond to the claimed open link. In the claimed invention, the open link is engageable and disengageable with the latch mechanism. In contrast, the opening actuating element 22 disclosed in *Bartel* is not engageable and disengageable with the latch mechanism defined by the rotary bolt 11 and the keeper 12. Thus, the disclosure contained in *Bartel* cannot be said to anticipate the claimed vehicle door lock system defined in independent Claim 1.

New Claims 17-20 are also presented for consideration. Claim 17 depends from Claim 3 and defines that the swing lever includes a projecting portion that is selectively engageable with several concave portions provided on the housing. The lever 6 disclosed in *Bartel* which is said to correspond to the claimed swing lever does not include a projecting portion that is selectively engageable with concave portions provided in a housing.

New independent Claim 18 defines the vehicle door lock system of the present invention in a manner different from independent Claim 1. Claim 18 defines that the door lock system includes a rotatable latch having a latch groove that receives the striker of the vehicle body, a rotatable pawl adapted to contact the latch to prevent rotation of the latch,

an open link, a swing lever, an electric driving source having a gear member, and a rotary gear member. The rotatable pawl includes a unitarily rotatable element that rotates unitarily with the pawl, and the open link is adapted to contact the unitarily rotatable element to rotate such element as well as the pawl so that the pawl is moved out of contact with the latch. The swing lever is connected to the open link, and the rotary gear member is arranged between the swing lever and the electric driving source. The rotary gear member is in meshing engagement with the gear member of the electric driving source, with the rotary gear member being directly connected to the swing lever.

The door lock unit disclosed in *Bartel* does not include an open link that contacts a unitarily rotatable element of the pawl to rotate the unitarily rotatable element and the pawl so that the pawl is moved out of contact with the latch. Thus, the vehicle door lock system defined in Claim 18 is also patentably distinguishable over the disclosure contained in *Bartel*.

In light of the foregoing, withdrawal of the rejection of record and allowance of this application are earnestly solicited.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in

resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application, the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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